1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

latter by an imaginary line drawn from the mouth of the Dras river to the sources of the Nubra river.

Its greatest extent is from north-west to south-east, from the head of the Dras river, in longitude 75° 30′, to Chibra, on the Indus, in longitude 79° 10′, a distance of 240 miles. Its greatest breadth is 290 miles, from the Kárákoram Pass, in north latitude 35° 10′, to the Rotang Pass in Lahul, in latitude 32° 25′. Its mean length is 200 miles, and its mean breadth 150 miles. Its whole extent is therefore only 30,000 square miles.

The natural divisions of the country are: 1st, Nubra on the Shayok: 2nd, Ladák Proper, on the Indus: 3rd, Zanskar, on the Zanskar river: 4th, Rukchu, around the lakes of Tshomo Riri and Tsho-Kar: 5th, Purik, Suru, and Dras, on the different branches of the Dras river: 6th, Spiti, on the Spiti river: and 7th, Lahul, on the Chandra and Bhaga, or head-waters of the Chenáb. These also are the actual divisions of the country, for the natural boundaries of a mountainous district generally remain unaltered, in spite of the changes wrought by war and religion.

Ladák is divided politically between Maharaja Guláb Sing and the East-India Company. To the former belong all the northern districts, to the latter only the two southern districts of Lahul and Spiti.

3.—DIFFERENT NAMES OF LADÁK.

Ladák, in Tibetan *La-tags*, is the most common name of the country; but it is also called *Mar-yul*,* or

* *dMar-yul* or d*Mar-po-yul*, "Red-land." Csoma de Körös spells the name *Mar-yul*, the "low-country;" but as Hwan Thsang, in A.D.

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

101 should more properly be written Tubet. But the name of Ti-bat (تبت) is mentioned by Abu Zaid Al Hasan, in A.D. 915, by Ibn Haukal in about A.D. 950, by Abu Rihán in 1030, and afterwards by Edrisi in A.D. 1154, all long prior to the Mogul conquests of Changez Khan in the 13th century, before whose time it is highly improbable that any Mogul names could have been in use in Persia. Mir Izzet Ullah says that Tibet is a Turki word signifying shawl-wool: but I should think the shawl-wool was called Tibeti because it came from Tibet. One might as well derive the name of India from indigo. There is no trace of the name of Tibet nor even of Bot in any of the classical authors: but the people are most probably described under the name of Seres, the inhabitants of Chinese Tartary, from whom the western merchants obtained their silks. According to Pausanias,* "the Greeks called the silkworm *Ser*, but the people of Serika probably gave it another name." Now the Tibetans call a worm *Srin*, or *Srin-bu*, and the silkworm *Dar-kyi-Srin*; and Pausanias says that the silkworm was twice the size of a beetle, Σηρην. As the Greeks had not seen the silkworm when they first used the name of Ser, it seems to me more than probable that they would have adopted the native name rather than have invented one of their own.

4.—DISTRICTS OF LADÁK.

634 103 The different districts of Ladák have been partially named according to their relative geographical positions; as *Nub-ra*, the western district (or Wessex), and *Lho-yul*, the southern country (or Suffolk). To the south-east

* VI. p. 26.

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

of Ladák, but to the north of *Ngari*, lies the extensive province of *Chang Thang*, or the "northern plains." Ladák itself is called Mar-yul or Low-land, perhaps from its inferior elevation to all the surrounding districts.

Nubra,* or the north-western district of Ladák, includes all the country drained by the Nubra and Shayok rivers. It is by far the largest district in the country, being about 128 miles in length by 72 miles in breadth, with an area of 9,200 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the Kárákoram mountains, and on the south by the Kailas range, which divides the Indus from the Shayok; and it extends from the frontier of Balti, in east longitude 77°, to the Pangkong lake on the borders of Rudok. The mean elevation of the inhabited parts of the country, from an average of fourteen observations at different places, is 12,763 feet.

Ladák is the central and most populous district of the country, from which it is sometimes called *Mang-yul*, or the "district of many people." It stretches along the Indus in a north-westerly direction from Rukchu to the frontier of Balti, a length of 120 miles, with an average breadth of 33 miles. Its area is about 4,000 square miles, and the mean elevation of the inhabited portions, as deduced from observations along the Indus, is 11,500 feet.

Zanskar includes all the country lying along the two great branches of the Zanskar river, in a general direction from south-east to north-west. It is bounded by Ladák on the north, by Rukchu on the east, by Lahul on the south, and by the small districts of Purik and Wanla on the west. The southern boundary is formed by the

* *Nub-ra*, western.

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

● 634 131 133 great Himálaya itself, the western boundary by the transverse range of Singgé Lá, and the northern boundary by the Trans-Himálayan chain. Its greatest length is 72 miles, but its mean length is not more than 56 miles, and its mean breadth is about the same, or 55 miles. It has an area of 3,000 square miles, and a mean elevation of 13,154 feet, as deduced from seven different observations along the course of the valley. The name [103] of *Zangs-kar** means "white copper" or brass; but I have no idea why it is so named.

Rukchu is the most elevated district in Ladák, and one of the loftiest inhabited regions in the known world. The mean height of the plains, as determined from twenty-one different spots where I encamped in 1846 and 1847, is 15,634 feet. This is the mean height of the great plain of Kyang, which extends from the foot of the Thung-lung Pass to the fords of the Sum-Gal, a length of 35 miles. It is also the height of the plains around the *Tsho-kar*, or White Lake, and of the long sloping plains from the Lanák ridge to the Para river. Rukchu is bounded on the north by Ladák Proper, on the east by the Chinese district of Chumurti, on the south by Lahul and Spiti, and on the west by Zanskar. Its length from the Thung-lung Pass to the head of the Hanlé river is 90 miles, and its mean breadth about 62 miles, which give an area of 5,500 square miles.

Purik, *Suru*, and *Dras*† are three small districts to

* *Zangs-dKar*, "copper-white."

103 † These names are not all Tibetan, as Dras is the Kashmíri name for the district of *Hem-babs*. In Tibetan they are written *Pu-rig*; *Su-ru*; and *Hem-babs*. The last name means "snow-fed or snow-descended,"

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634 131 133

the west of Zanskar, on the high road between Kashmir and Lé. To *Purik* belong the villages of the Waka and Phugal rivers, from their sources in the transverse range of Singgé Lá to Kargyil, below their junction. The principal places in Purik are Mulbil, Paskyum, and Sod, each of which once had a petty chief of its own. *Suru* also owned a petty chief who lived at Lung Kartse, the principal place in the valley. The river is sometimes called by this name, but more generally by that of Suru. The Suru river joins the Waka-chu immediately below Kargyil. *Dras* is the most westerly of these small [103] districts. Its Tibetan name of Hem-babs (snow-fed or snow descended) is descriptive of its most striking peculiarity, as the most snowy district of Ladák. [132] It owes this peculiarity to the great depression in the Himálaya, at the head of the Dras river, which allows the constantly humid vapours of Kashmir to pass to the north of the mountains, where they become condensed by the cold, and are precipitated in rain or snow, according to the season of the year. These small districts extend in length from the frontier of Balti to Zanskar, a distance of 84 miles, and in breadth from the head of the Suru valley to the Photo-la, a distance of 50 miles. The area is 4,200 square miles, and the mean height of the inhabited parts, as determined by the elevation of thirteen camps, is 11,196 feet.

*Spiti** is bounded on the north by Rukchu, on the

Hem being the Sanscrit *Hima*, which has long been naturalized in Tibet. See Csoma's Tibetan Dictionary, *in voce*.

* *Spi-ti*. In Kullu and Kanáwar this district is generally called Piti, but the proper name is Spiti.

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west by Lahul and Kullu, on the south by Kanáwar, and on the east by the Chinese district of Chumurti. It comprises the whole valley of the Spiti river, from its source to the junction of the Para, a length of about 64 miles. Its mean length is not more than 52 miles, and its mean breadth only 36 miles, which give an area of about 1,900 square miles. The mean elevation of the inhabited parts, as determined by the heights of eight camps, is 12,986 feet.

Lahul (or Lho-yul, the "southern district") is bounded on the north by Zanskar and Rukchu, on the west by Káshtwár, on the south by Chamba and Kullu, and on the east by Spiti. It comprises the valleys of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers, as well as that of the Chandra-Bhaga or united stream as far as Treloknáth, below which the people are of Hindu race and religion, with but little admixture of Tibetan blood. With the single exception of the valley of the Indus, Lahul possesses more cultivable land, and a less rigorous climate than any of the other districts of Ladák. There the currant and the gooseberry are both found wild, and in the lower parts of the valley towards Treloknáth the mountain slopes are covered with fir trees. Like Kanáwar, Lahul partakes somewhat of the climate and productions of India as well as of those of Tibet. The people, their language, and their dwellings are mostly Tibetan, but with a strong mixture of Indian origin. Lahul is 68 miles in length by 34 in breadth, which give an area of 2,312 square miles. The mean elevation of its inhabited parts, as determined by the heights of nine camps, is 11,063 feet.

The following table of the extent and mean elevation

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of the different districts of Ladák is added for the sake of comparison.

		Extent in sq. miles.			Mean height.
M. Gulab Sing.	Nubra	9,216	...	...	12,763
	Ladák	3,960	...	...	11,500
	Zanskar	3,080	...	...	13,154
	Rukchu	5,580	...	...	15,634
	Purik-Suru-Dras ...	4,200	...	...	11,196
			26,036	...	...
British.	Spiti	2,312	...	...	12,986
	Láhul	1,872	...	...	11,068
			4,184		
	Total sq. miles		30,220	...	Mean height 12,613

5.—NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES.

The countries to the north, the west, and the south of Ladák are inhabited by people who speak at least four languages quite distinct from Tibetan. To the north the people of Yarkand and Kotan speak Turki; to the west, beyond Balti, the people of Astor, Gilget, and Hunza Nager speak different dialects of Dardu, while the Kashmiris have a language peculiar to themselves; and to the south the people of Chamba, Kullu, and Bisahar speak a dialect of Hindi, which is chiefly derived from Sanskrit. To the east and south-east the people of Rudok, Chang-Thang, and Ngari speak Tibetan only.

To the north of the Kárákoram range, lie the Chinese districts of Yarkand, Kotan, and Káshgár, which, with the exception of the Chinese functionaries, and Tartar soldiers, are wholly peopled by Musulmáns. As I found it difficult to obtain any truth-like information regarding the statistics of these countries, I confined my inquiries to their natural productions, in the hope of meeting with

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

the whole power in his own hands. The apparent power of the prime minister was absolute, but his real power was much curbed by the wide-spread authority of the monastic establishments, and by the partial independence of the petty *Gyalpos* and district *Kahlons*.

In Great Tibet the *Kahlons* of the four chief provinces of *Ngári*, *U*, *Tsáng*, and *Khám*, were elected by the civil power in subordination to the Grand Lama, while the inferior *Kahlons*, and all other petty officers of state, were elected by the four chief *Kahlons*. But in Ladák the prime minister's office was almost hereditary; that is, it was restricted to a member of one of the families of the principal *Kahlons*, or governors of districts. The choice was determined, as in other countries, either by royal favour and successful intrigue, or by greater popularity and superior abilities. Possession, however, gave so firm a grasp of power, that the office was usually retained in one family for several generations. The Kahlon of Moorcroft's time was the Kahlon or petty Gyalpo of the Chimra valley; and the power remained in the hands of his family until the final settlement of Zoráwar Sing, at Lé.

Many of the principal nobility of Ladák were petty chiefs of valleys, which had once been independent. Thus there was a *Gyalpo* in Nubra; another in Gya; a third in Spiti; a fourth in Zanskar; a fifth in Paskyum; a sixth in Soth; a seventh in Suru; and an eighth in Hembabs, or Drás. The chiefs of Paskyum and of Soth distinguished themselves by their protracted resistance on the first invasion of Ladák by Zoráwar Sing.

The prime minister was simply styled *Kahlon*, or "the minister," or *Bangki-Kahlon*, "the chief minis-

5: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

ter,"* while his deputy was usually known by the addition of his own name, as *Kahlon-Rigsen*, "minister *Rigsen*," or by prefixing the term *Nono*, as *Nono Kahlon*, "the younger, or deputy minister."† The other Kahlons were distinguished by the names of the districts over which they ruled, as *Kahlon-Bazgo*, "the governor of Bazgo."

The next great officers were the *Lonpos*,‡ or governors of towns, and the *Kharpons*,§ or commanders of forts. The former were distinguished by the names of their respective towns; as *Lé-pon*, "the governor of *Lé*;" *Gar-pon*, "governor of *Garo*." In Lé, also, there were the *Mak-pon*,‖ or "commander-in-chief," and the *Chagsot*,¶ or "lord high treasurer;" the *Shogam-Chagsot*,** or "head collector of taxes;" as well as the *Shakspon*,†† or "chief justice;" and the *Khrimpons*,‡‡ or "magistrates." Lastly there was the *Káká-Tádsi*,§§ or "head master of the horse;" and the *Chagsi-Goba*, or Kotwál, an office equivalent to that of mayor.

* This is the "Banka khalun" of Moorcroft (I. pp. 238—249). The true title was *dBang-kyi-bKah-bLon* or *Bangki-kahlon*, that is, "the powerful minister."

† *No-no* is the usual term of respect which is used in addressing any young man of the higher ranks, and when prefixed to *Kahlon* it means the younger or deputy minister. Moorcroft (I. pp. 334, 335) gives the term, without the title, as the usual designation of the deputy minister, just as we should say "the deputy" instead of the deputy chairman. *Nono* is also applied to all under-officers, as *Nono-Chagsot*, the "under-treasurer;" *Nono-Shakspon*, the "deputy justiciary."

‡ *bLon-po*, "the manager, arranger, or governor." Moorcroft (I. p. 255) calls him *Lompa*.

§ *mKhar-dPon*, the "fort-chief." ‖ *dMag-dPon*, the "war-chief."

¶ *Phyag-mDsod*, pronounced *Chag-sot*.

** *Shogam*, "a duty, a tax." †† *gShags-dPon*, "justice-chief."

‡‡ *Khrims-dPon*, "law-chief."

§§ *Gá-gá-rTá-rDsi*, "head master of the horse."

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622 The inferior officers were the *Mipons*,* or *Gobas*† (that is, literally, the "head men" of the villages), and the *Shogampa*, or provincial collectors of taxes and customs.

622 The *Gobas* (who were also called *Grongpons*,‡ or
634 "village chiefs") were directly responsible to the *Kahlons*, or *Gyalpos*, of their respective districts, in all criminal matters, and in most accounts of revenue; although the *Mipons*, or head men, of some of the principal towns, rendered their accounts direct to the *Chagsot*, or lord high treasurer of Lé. But these exceptions were, I believe, only made in the cases of such villages as were set apart for the particular maintenance of the queen, or of some members of the royal
645 family. The *Chagsot*, or lord high treasurer, rendered his accounts to the *Kahlon*, or prime minister, who kept the privy purse of the king and his family.

622 The titles of the different functionaries varied in
634 different districts; but the most common were those which I have just given. The petty *Gyalpos* and provincial *Kahlons* were frequently called *Depons*,§ or "district chiefs," a name which recalls the Sanscrit *Dés-pati*, and the Greek Δεσποτης. Among the Mahomedans of Ladák (both the pure Kashmiris and the hybrid Argons), the petty chiefs are invariably called *Chho;* as *Gya-pa-chho*,‖ "the *Gyalpo* of Gya."

* *Mi-dPon*, "man-chief or head man."

† *hGo-ba*, emphatically the head man, from *hGo*, "the head, the top of anything."

‡ *Grong-dPon*. In Great Tibet, and in some parts of Ladák, this word is pronounced *Tongpon*. The Lamas more especially adhere to the pronunciation of Lhasa.

§ *sDé-dPon*, "district-chief." ‖ *mChhog*, "the head, the chief."

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

or about £8,000 sterling. The last item is the gross amount derived from a heavy tax which has been imposed on all the *gonpas*, or monasteries, throughout the country. The sums paid by the different religious establishments were thus stated to me— 651 793

Monastery of Hemis (with Hanlé)	... ...	Rs. 900
„ Chimra	... ...	900
„ Thigsé	... ...	500
„ Pitak	... ...	500
„ Gáwan	... ...	900
„ Láma Yúrrú	... ...	900
Twenty-five smaller monasteries at Rs. 60 each	=	1,500
		Rs. 6,300

The charge incurred in the maharaja's government of Ladák, I found it impossible to ascertain with any degree of precision, as it was a delicate subject to make inquiries about. From various sources I could only learn that the country is divided into districts, over each of which is appointed a thanadar on a small salary, varying from Rs. 200 to Rs. 500 a month. There are five of these thanadars in Ladák, each independent of the others, and accountable only to the maharaja himself. The principal of them is Basti Rám, the thanadar of Lé, a shrewd and intelligent man, and a tried soldier. He is a native of Káshtwár, and was a petty officer under Zoráwar Sing on the first invasion of Ladák. He was present at the surrender of Skardo, the capital of Balti; and he was one of the few survivors of Zoráwar Sing's unfortunate expedition into Great Tibet in the winter of 1841, A.D. His quickness and experience, combined with a frank and easy manner, secured him the confidence of the maharaja; and after successfully ruling the district of Zanskar during a very turbulent period, he has now obtained one of the highest posts in 634 634 159

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159 the maharaja's service, in the governorship of Ladák
●634 Proper, of which the capital is Lé. His personal salary is only Rs. 500 a month, but he is permitted to trade on his own account to a limited extent; and his profits, together with the presents which he receives from merchants and others, amount to a very handsome income, [439] which was estimated vaguely at Rs. 20,000 a year. But the maharaja himself is the chief trader in his own [643] dominions, more particularly in the two staple articles, the export of saffron, and the import of wool. I have therefore strong doubts whether Basti Rám can realize more than ten or twelve thousand rupees yearly. But even this sum, when added to his personal salary, will yield him a respectable income of Rs. 18,000, or nearly £1,800 a year.

634 There are five thanadars, who are placed in the following districts, over which they exercise military command as well as civil authority. 1. Ladák; 2. Zanskar; 3. Kargyil; 4. Drás; 5. Nubra. The salaries of these officers, at the average rate of about Rs. 300 a month, amount to Rs. 18,000 per annum.

701 The number of troops garrisoned in Ladák was variously stated to me by different individuals at from 600 to 800 men; of whom about 200 are stationed at Lé, and in different parts of the district of Ladák Proper. The others are divided among the remaining districts. At Lé also there are thirty artillerymen with a battery of four guns.

701 The military expenses were estimated at between
652 thirty and forty thousand rupees a year; and as the pay of the soldier is nominally five rupees a month, this sum (Rs. 36,000) would support a force of 600 men. But the men do not receive more than two or three rupees in

Kangra District.)
6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883)1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

PART III.—LAHAUL AND SPITI.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISTRICT.

General description.

[634] 101 131 133 [161]

The cantons or *wazárís* of Láhaul and Spiti together form the trans-Himalayan division of the Kángra district. Láhaul lies between north latitude 32° 8′ and 32° 59′ and east longitude 76° 49′ and 77° 47′, and comprises an area of 2,255 square miles and a population of 5,860 souls, or 2·6 to the square mile; while Spiti lies between north latitude 31° 42′ and 32° 58′ and east longitude 77° 21′ and 78° 35′; its area is 2,155 square miles and its population 2,862 souls or 1·3 per square mile. The two together occupy the trough between the central and outer-Himalayas, and form a long oblong, of an average length of about 105 miles, and breadth of about 38 miles. It is shut in to the north, and divided from Ladákh and Chinese Tibet by the great snowy range called by General Cunningham the western Himalaya, and recognized by him as the continuation above the Satlaj of the main central-Himalaya. This range has here a mean elevation of more than 18,000 feet. To the south and east, except at the north-east corner where the Spiti river escapes into Tibet, it is shut in and divided from Chamba, Bangáhal, Kúlu and Kanáwar by the mid-Himalaya, which has a mean elevation of more than 17,000 feet. To the west it borders on Chamba-Láhaul, from which it is separated by a lofty off-shoot from the outer-Himalayas, which advances to meet the central range, leaving only a narrow gap through which the waters of the Chenáb escape. In the middle it is cut in two by a ridge, some four or five miles long and 15,000 feet high, which connects the ends of two high spurs thrown out by the great chains above mentioned. This ridge, which is generally known as the Kanzám or Pálamo ridge, from the names of the passes which cross it, forms the boundary between Láhaul and Spiti. The boundary line given in the Trigonometrical Survey maps gives Spiti near a hundred square miles of waste to the west of the Kanzám ridge, on the banks of the Chandra; but in revision of Settlement, with the assent of the headmen of both *wazárís*, Mr. Lyall recorded the Kanzám ridge, which is the water-shed line between the Chandra and Spiti rivers, as the true boundary. It is generally allowed on both sides that the ridge is the ancient boundary; it is also the natural one, and moreover the Gaddí shepherds, who for twenty years have grazed in the debated land, have been paying dues to the *wazír* of Láhaul, and not to him of Spiti. These two *wazárís* have each in many respects a character of their own, and deserve a separate description.

[651] [563]

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

of Láhaul. They are mendicant minstrels, the men playing the pipes and kettle-drums, while the women dance, sing and play the tambourine. They sometimes engage in trade, but only in a small way by barter; and the saying *Hensi ka sauda* implies that a transaction is mean and paltry. They *never* own land, and "the Beda no land, the dog no load" is a proverbial saying. They are considered low and disreputable; and other classes will not eat food together with or cooked by them. In 1868, of the men who returned themselves as Kanets, 382 were *lámás* or monks attached to the five monasteries. Of the women only about ten are nuns, and they do not spend the winter in the monasteries like the nuns of Láhaul, but live at home with their fathers or brothers. Many other women in Spiti live at home unmarried all their lives; others who cannot get married in a legitimate way walk off to Tibet with pedlars or traders, or go to live with some *dotul* or labouring man who takes their fancy. Some of the richer landholders have men-servants living in their houses who are known as *lápas*; they eat from their master's table, are servants of all work, and do not marry, though they often keep company with some unmarried woman of the house or neighbourhood. One or two men-servants are kept in each monastery to light fires, &c., and are called *tánás* or *togochás*.

Chapter III, D. Village Communities and Tenures. Caste in Spiti.

The Thákurs are the gentry and quondam rulers of the valley. They are more or less pure Botias or Mongolians by blood, but are beginning, as the natural sequence to the Hindúising tendency already described, to assert a Rájpút origin. Three families of Thákurs retain in modern times a status of importance as *jágírdárs*—that of Hari Chand, *negí* of Láhaul, who holds his village of Kolong, or Todpa, in *jágír*; that of Devi Chand, who holds Ghamrang; and that of Hira Chand, who holds Gondola. The aggregate cash assessment of these *jágírs* is Rs. 975, subject, however, to payments (*nazarána*) aggregating Rs. 250 per annum. Thákur Hari Chand, son of Tára Chand, in virtue of his office as *negí*, receives certain other emoluments. The most important of these are one-fourth the total revenue grazing dues in *khalsa kothís*, and fines in criminal cases.

Leading families.

SECTION D.—VILLAGE COMMUNITIES AND TENURES.

Láhaul is sub-divided by the people into Rangloi or the Chandra valley, Gárah or Punán, the Bhága valley, and Pattan or the valley of the Chandra Bhága. The first valley contains four *kothís*, the second four, and the third six, making fourteen *kothís* in all. Some of the *kothís* correspond with the boundaries of the existing or extinct *jágírs* or fiefs of the Thákurs or petty barons of Láhaul. The rest are merely groups of villages or hamlets, which have for long past been connected for administration purposes. For instance, *kothí* Ranikí consists of several villages, scattered here and there among those of other *kothís*, which were formerly held in *jágír* by a Kúlu princess, and which have ever since held together as one community under one headman. Nor is the village (as Mr. Barnes says of the hamlet in Kángra) the elementary part of the system in Láhaul;

Sub-divisions in Láhaul: Nature of townships and villages.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

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Chapter III, D.

Village Communities and Tenures.

Sub-divisions in Lâhaul. Nature of townships and villages.

though it has a name of its own, and the houses stand together almost wall to wall, yet it sometimes happens that some of these houses, with the fields attached to them, are reckoned to belong to another village, or to another *kothí* even. The real elementary parts are the household allotments, which, for want of another name, may be called *jeolas*, as in Kúlu. A village or group of houses is known to contain a certain number of these estates, each of which has a name of its own, which is applied indiscriminately to either the house or the land. It is the custom also, as in the case of Scotch lairds, for friends and neighbours to address the head of the family by this same territorial name. The fields forming an allotment are generally all in the *chauks* or blocks of arable land round the village, but some of them are sometimes at a distance in the *chauks* of other villages.

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Rights in waste lands by custom of country (Lâhaul).

From the above description it will be seen that no definite boundaries in the waste between *kothís* or villages can exist; certain natural limits to both are recognized in a loose way, but not so much as limits of properties as in a geographical sense. The waste lands are owned by the ruler of the country or superior landlord, a position which appears to have been formerly occupied by the Rája in a *khálsa kothí*, and the Thákur in a *jágír kothí*. It appears clear that the Thákur must be considered to have been lord of the waste, for his permission was necessary before new fields could be made in it, and such fields paid him rent thenceforth; he could also grant sheep-runs in the high wastes to foreign shepherds and take grazing dues from them; so, again, the estate or *jeola* of a landholder dying without near heirs lapsed to him, and was granted by him to a new man on payment of a fee or *nazarána*. All the villagers have rights of use in the waste, but the cattle or flocks of one *kothí* sometimes graze regularly in the lands of another, and the men of one *kothí* sometimes rely for fuel and timber on the trees growing in another. Within the *kothís* also the different villages use the grass and wood indiscriminately; where the villages are far apart, they keep in practice to separate grounds; where close, they mingle: it is all a matter of custom. There is no other rule by which a dispute can be decided.

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Original form of holdings of fields (Lâhaul).

The allotments of fields or *jeolas* are supposed to have been made authoritatively at some remote period, and to have originally been all equal, and subject to the same amount of rent or taxes, and all liable to furnish one man for service or forced labour when summoned by the lord of the country. They also appear to have been indivisible. In fact, in Gárá and Rangloi, where the Tibetan element predominates in the population, they are still almost all undivided; in Pattan, where the Hindú element predominates, a great deal of sub-division has taken place. After the first allotment was made, other fields were sometimes reclaimed from the waste; these were sometimes formed into a separate allotment, and rated at a full *jeola* or a half or a quarter according to value; or if they were reclaimed by one of the original holders, his holding was thereafter rated at 2 *jeolas* or 1½ or 1¼. A household owning two *jeolas*, had to pay double taxes and take a double share of service; if it held a half only, it was rated in strict proportion. After a time when not much

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6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

The demand by travellers for pack horses over the Bára Lácha and Shinkál is in the same way borne rateably by the ten *kothís*, and within the *kothís* by the different holdings. The defaulting *kothí* or landowner pays the owner of the substitute pony a considerable sum in cash at rates fixed for the different journeys.* Defalcations are numerous and the accounts therefore perplexing. It is the custom, therefore, for each *kothí* to appoint by vote an elder to represent the *kothí* in the committee of *begár* accounts. He is called the *siyáná* and gets Rs. 6 cash per annum from the common account, and is himself excused all *begár*. To collect and store supplies in readiness for travellers, and to keep the account of the store, two men are selected year by year in each *kothí* under the name of *talabdár*. They get no pay, but are excused their turn of the *begár* while in office. The above regulations apply to the regular landholders; they appear to have been made by the people themselves under general pressure put upon them by the authorities. In Pattan there are some Dágí families who hold *chetís* or small allotments of land rent-free from the State, on condition of stacking wood at certain halting places.

Begár or forced labour demandable from landholders in Láhaul.

There are five *kothís* in Spiti—Todpá, Barjik, Shám, Chuzí and Pín; the four first are in the main valley, the fifth includes the whole valley of the Pín river, and is shut off from the rest of Spiti by high mountains, except where the river forces its way through a deep narrow gorge to join the main stream. The name Todpá means head of the valley, Barjik the centre, and Shám the lower end, and these *kothís* divide the main valley between them accordingly. The name Chuzí implies endowment or assignment to religious uses, and the *kothí* consists of the villages scattered here and there over the whole length of valley. Again, in a few cases, different holdings in the same village belong to different *kothís*. It is hardly necessary to add that there are no boundaries between *kothis* in the waste, except perhaps in the case of Pín. A kind of boundary will be found to exist between villages which are not separated by any large expanse of waste; that is, such villages have loosely recognized limits within which both exercise separately the right of grazing cattle or cutting grass and wood; but even where such limits are clearest, they do not imply a full property of the soil. The right of the State to grant new holdings in such waste, if it could give water by making a new canal, would not be disputed; and where the villages, as is often the case, are far apart, there are no boundaries between them of any kind.

Sub-divisions in Spiti, and nature of town-ship and villages.

The form of tenure of the fields attached to the villages is the same as in Láhaul. Each field belongs to a separate estate or house, and with other fields forms its allotment supposed to have been originally conferred by the States and to be now independently held of it.† Owing to the custom of primogeniture which prevails these allotments are never sub-divided. The water available for irrigation

Form of holding of fields and nature of tenure of waste and arable lands.

* Of the ten *kothis* two have no ponies, being on the south side of the Chandra, so they of course default each time.

† *Zing kom* is a local word used to describe such an allotment. A *zing kom chenpá* or full allotment, varies from three to seven acres in extent according to quality of the soil. Some few families only hold a half allotment or *zing khom fitha*.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

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Land and Land Revenue.

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Nature of rent or land-tax under the Rájas in Spiti.

Those assigned to the monasteries paid in grain only at from fifteen to twenty *lákh* each, and formed *kothí* Chuzi; those in other or *Khálsa kothís* paid a little grain, and also sums of cash, cloth, and paper, but the last two items were not assessed on all holdings. The cash assessment of all the holdings in a village was, with very few exceptions, the same, though the holdings seem to have always differed to some extent in size; the grain assessment varied from one to ten *khal* or *lákh* according to the amount and quality of the land held. The grain items in *Khálsa kothís* also had in many cases been from time to time assigned to monasteries. All the assigned grain was called *pun*, the unassigned grain was called *netal* or barley tax. The amount collected under the latter name on the king's account must have been more than 200 *lákh*; but probably those figures represent correctly the amount which went to Ladákh, for the greater part of the grain collections were spent year by year in Spiti in the king's name in certain annual ceremonies and State charges. This was the old state of things, which Major Hay evidently did not fully comprehend, for he states in his report that 50 Chinese families settled in Spiti, paid a tribute to China of 200 *lákh* of grain, and that an envoy from Tolang came to fetch it every year. Again, in another place, he mentions that the aforesaid Chinese families go by the name of Chuzi, and present annually 200 *lákh* to the chief monastery of Spiti. All this was a mistake: the Chuzi families were not Chinese, but the men of Chuzi *kothí*, the revenue of which was assigned to monasteries. One of these monasteries, to which something less than 200 *lákhs* were assigned, was at Tolang in Chinese Tibet; hence the story of tribute to China.

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Sikh revenue administration and arrangements made at Summary and Regular Settlement (Spiti).

From 1839 to 1846 the Sikh *thánadár* at Ladákh took the revenue of Spiti. For the first four years Rs. 2,000, plus two ponies and 25 sheep, were exacted annually. For the last three years the cash was reduced to Rs. 1,031, but 100 iron crow-bars were added, and the number of sheep increased to sixty. A Sikh force also plundered the valley in these years. In the autumn of 1846 Mr. Vans-Agnew made a Summary Settlement, that is, he fixed the amount of revenue to be paid to Government at Rs. 753. No records were compiled of any kind, nor was any report submitted. When relieved of the pressure of the Sikh exactions, the Spiti people at once reverted to their old fiscal arrangements. Mr. Vans-Agnew probably knew nothing of the grain revenue assigned to the monasteries, as he merely passed quickly through a part of the country; and if he knew of the unassigned grain, he, no doubt, intended to abandon it. But the people considered the Rs. 753 to be in place only of the cash, cloth, and iron formerly paid to the kings of Ladákh, and divided it accordingly with strict regard to the old fixed assessment. The assigned grain or *pun* they paid as before to the monasteries, and the unassigned grain or *netal* to the representative of Government, who for the first three years was a *wazír* of the Basáhir Rája,* and after that the hereditary *wazír* of Spiti, commonly called the *Nono*. Most of it the *Nono* expended in the manner customary

* The 400 káká grain which Major Hay mentions as taken by the *wazír* in excess of Rs. 753 in 1846, and as collected again in 1849, were the *netal* collections, not the produce of the Government land at Dunka.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

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in the time of the kings of Ladákh. The balance he appropriated as a perquisite of office. This balance was not very large, as the amount paid by each holding was somewhat reduced when the *Nono* took charge. At the Regular Settlement in 1851-52 Mr. Barnes maintained the Government demand at the amount fixed by Mr. Vans-Agnew; he remained unaware of the grain payments, for he never visited Spiti, and relied upon Major Hay's report for his information, which in this respect was erroneous. He, however, sent up a *tahsíldár* to make out a rough kind of rent-roll or *khewat*. This official roughly divided the Rs. 753 upon all five *kothís* with reference to the number of holdings in each. He must have heard of the grain payment, but he was in a great hurry, and seems to have considered that they could not be taken into account; so, without making any report to Mr. Barnes, he made the holdings in Chuzí pay as much cash as those of other *kothís*, though they paid ten times as much grain. Not to pay the grain to the monasteries would have been sacrilege, and would have been resented by the whole community, so the Chuzí men paid the grain as before, though with much grumbling, which no officer of Government seems to have heard or understood. In 1862 Mr. Lyall submitted a report, in which he recommended that the *pun* or assigned grain, with that part of the *netal* or unassigned grain which was annually devoted to religious purposes, should be lumped together, and the sum total redistributed equally by the people on all holdings, and that the remainder of the *netal* should be remitted, and the *Nono* remunerated for the loss of this and other unauthorised collections by an *inám* or grant out of the revenue of Rs. 100 or 150. These proposals were not fully understood by officers who had never seen the country, and no definite orders were passed for some years. Eventually the *Nono* got an *inám* and was given to understand that he must not collect the *netal*; the monasteries were left to collect the *pun* as before, but it was not formally at least recognised as assigned revenue. This did not relieve the Chuzí men of their grievance, but in fact made it worse by comparison, for it was the *khálsa kothís* to whom the *netal* was remitted. Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Division, again represented their case to Government in 1866; and as revision of Settlement had then commenced, Mr. Lyall was directed to go to Spiti and redistribute the revenue so as to get rid of their grievance. Mr. Forsyth also recommended the revival of a part of the *netal* collections (which had practically ceased only for a year or two) to form a fund from which to pay the *lambardárs* of *kothís*, and the grant of an increased *inám* at six annas in the rupee on the revenue of Spiti to the *Nono*. These proposals were approved. Eventually Mr. Lyall revised the *netal* collections not in part, but in whole, and recommended their assignment in part to village officials and in part to other purposes to which they were applied by custom of former days.* The grievance of the men of Chuzí *kothí*

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* The *pun* paid to monasteries by present returns amounts to 1,461 *khás* 7 *path*, and the *netal* to 456 *khás* 11 *path*. The total grain revenue, therefore, amounts to 1,917 *khás* 18 *path*, which at 2 *khás* per rupee, a rather low price, is equal to Rs. 959.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

Chapter V, B. Land and Land Revenue.

British assessment of Spiti.

was removed by a redistribution of the cash assessment; more than half their cash revenue being taken off their shoulders and distributed upon the other *kothás*.

Mr. Barnes thus describes the assessment he made at the Regular Settlement:—"Spiti had been assessed summarily by Mr. Vans-Agnew, afterwards murdered at Mooltan. He was deputed to that remote district in 1846 A. D., and settled the whole tract at Rs. 753 per annum. Compared with Láhaul, the rate is decidedly low, but the country is more inhospitable and dreary. It is not so easy of access, and is removed several hundred miles, and by lofty ranges of mountains, from the head-quarters of the district. It is surrounded, I may say, on all sides by Independent States. Its political position is singular, and at various periods, Spiti has been the feudatory of China, Basáhir, Ladákh and Kúlu; and even at this time there are Chinese emigrants residing in Spiti, who pay a divided allegiance partly to us and to their mother country. From such a region, so peculiarly situated, revenue was a secondary object. The people, moreover, argued that Mr. Agnew had fixed the assessment for twenty years. I attached no weight to this argument, as their deed of lease specified no such conditions; but adverting to the remoteness and poverty of the country and its isolated position, I determined to make no enhancement. The present demand was quite sufficient to indicate the tenure of the British Government, and after this recognition of our claims, I saw no advantage in exacting an additional revenue, which, from its trifling amount, could be of no importance to the Government, and might entail distress upon the people. I accordingly left the demand of the Summary Settlement of Rs. 753 unaltered."

Ii: Singh D-5 (1932) 1933 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
Spiti

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

With Plate M.

Tibet: Disposal of the Dead. Singh.

Disposal of the Dead by Mutilation in Spiti (W. Tibet). *By Dr. Bhagwan Singh.*

133 The district called Spiti is now under British administration, and forms a part of the 149
134 Kangra District in the Punjab. On all sides it is surrounded by the snowy ranges of the inner Himalayas. The whole of this country lies on the banks of the Spiti river, which in turn is a tributary of the Sutlej. The altitude of Spiti is from 9,000 feet to 14,000 feet above sea level.

About a century ago Spiti was a part of Central Tibet, since when it was annexed by the then
779 Raja of Kashmir, and subsequently taken over by the British Government. The inhabitants follow
144 the Buddhist faith as practised in Tibet, and are of Mongolian origin, with an admixture of Aryan
177 blood. Practically all their customs are derived from the usages of pure Tibetans.

764 I propose in this article to give an account of one special mode of disposing of the dead—disposal by mutilation. As has been already stated by the Rev. Walter Asboe, in his account of the disposal of the dead in Tibet, there are four methods employed when disposing of the dead. They are (1) Mutilation of the corpse by chopping it in pieces; (2) Cremation on a funeral pyre; (3) Burial in the earth; and (4) Throwing the corpse into the water.

766 I was informed that whilst the corpses of laymen may be disposed of in any of the four ways already mentioned, ecclesiastics are always cremated on a funeral oven made of stone or earth in the form of a square. This applies especially to Spiti, for in other parts of Tibet both clergy and laymen alike are cremated after death on a funeral pyre of logs.

764 The most propitious time for mutilating corpses is when the harvesting and winnowing operations
793 are performed, whilst at other seasons of the year the mode of disposal is determined by the lamas (priests) who consult their religious books for the most auspicious method.

The site chosen for the mutilation ceremony is usually a good distance from the village. Here again the lamas are consulted as to the most propitious position—whether it should be the north, south, east, or west of the village.

000 During the month of August, 1932, I went on a medical tour to Spiti, and I was fortunate in visiting a village where the mutilation ceremony was performed.

On August 26th I reached a village called Manay, situated on the right bank of the Spiti River. On arrival there about midday, I was informed that a young man suffering from pains in the abdomen had died early that morning.

On inquiry, the villagers told me that the day before my arrival the deceased went with some people from the same village to repair a road running between Pow and Manay. Whilst lifting a boulder which had obstructed the road, he felt slight pains in his belly, causing him to abandon his work and proceed home. These pains increased in severity, followed by vomiting and acute constipation. The pains were spasmodic, and localized in the region of the navel, and he was unable to lie on his back, but remained in a sitting posture until his death.

1 1 [See source # 13 in AJ1 Tibet AJ1 -- Analyt]